

Amendments to the Claims:

Claims 1-5 (Canceled).

6. (Previously Presented) A shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor containing a catalytically active component or a precursor thereof, supported on a carrier, which carrier is an elongated shaped particle comprising two protrusions; each protrusion extending from and attached to a central position, wherein the central position is aligned along the longitudinal axis of the particle, the cross-section of the particle occupying the space encompassed by the outer edges of six circles around a central circle, each of the six circles touching two neighboring circles while two alternating circles are equidistant to the central circle and may be attached to the central circle and the two circles adjacent to the two alternating circles, but not the common circle touching the central circle, minus the space occupied by the four remaining outer circles and including four remaining interstitial regions, the elongated shaped particle further comprising one to four additional protrusions, each attached to an existing endstanding protrusion as defined above, the additional protrusion being defined in the same way as above, the existing endstanding protrusion becoming the new central circle, and the original central circle becoming the other protrusion.

7. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 6 wherein the component is selected from the group consisting of elements of Group VIII of the Periodic Table of the Elements.

8. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 7 wherein the carrier is a refractory oxide.

9. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 7 containing an element or compound selected from the group consisting of Group IIA, IIIB, IVB, VB, VIB, VIIB and VIII of the Periodic Table of the Elements.

10. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst or catalyst precursor of claim 6 wherein the catalyst has been made by extrusion.

Claims 11-16 (Canceled).

17. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst of claim 6 wherein the additional protrusions have diameters in the range between 0.87 and 1.15 times the diameter of the central circle.

18. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst of claim 6 wherein the component is cobalt.

19. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst of claim 6 wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of silica, alumina and titania.

20. (Previously Presented) The shaped catalyst of claim 6 wherein the component is cobalt and the carrier is titania.